

What is EQIP?

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) offers technical expertise for planning and designing conservation practices that protect our water and air, increase soil productivity, enable you to care for farm animals, manage animal waste and sustain agricultural land. The EQIP Program offers cost-share funds to make these practices affordable.

Who can participate?

All landowners and operators who are engaged in crop or livestock production on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program. Participation is voluntary.

What land is eligible?

Eligible land includes cropland, pasture, hayland, forestland or other lands on which crops or livestock are produced. All of these lands are equally eligible; there are no priority areas. Land under a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract is not eligible during the term of the CRP contract.

Is there money available through this program?

EQIP offers federal cost-share dollars at variable rates of 25 to 75 percent of the average cost of an approved conservation practice. Approved practices for Rhode Island are listed in this brochure. Limited resource producers and beginning farmers may qualify for higher cost share rates.



What are incentive payments?

Incentive payments may be available to encourage producers to adopt land management practices that are not already being applied. Examples include: nutrient management, pest management, irrigation water management, and prescribed grazing.

Is there a limit on the amount of money I can receive?

Yes. The total limitation on EQIP payments, which includes both cost-share and incentive payments, has been increased to \$450,000 per individual or entity over the life of the 2002 Farm Bill, regardless of the number of farms or contracts. There can be more than one EQIP contract per tract of land.

Where does the money come from?

Funds for EQIP come from the federal government's 2002 Farm Bill appropriations and are administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

How do I get started?

You should visit our NRCS office or your local



Conservation District office to sign up for EQIP. Next, a visit to your property will be scheduled. You will work with a conservation planner to inventory your resources and identify opportunities for conservation improvements. Together you will decide how to address your natural resource concerns. Your decisions will be recorded in a conservation plan. Your conservation plan will become part of your EQIP application and will be ranked against other farms in Rhode Island for a portion of available funding.

How does the ranking process work?



NRCS evaluates each application using a state-wide ranking procedure that is updated each year. Applications are scored by identifying the natural resource concerns, the

extent of treatment and the environmental benefits to be achieved, as compared to the cost of practices needed to achieve those benefits. Additional consideration maybe given to proposals that enhance compliance with environmental regulations, agricultural land protection, leveraged funds, agricultural production, conservation systems, innovation, and cost effectiveness. Applications with the highest environmental benefit will be awarded contracts until all Rhode Island EQIP funds are obligated.

Will my application be funded?

If your application ranks high and receives funding, NRCS will have you sign an EQIP contract and agree to do the conservation work according to a schedule and NRCS standards and specifications.

How does the contract work?

The contract will last a minimum of two years and a maximum of 10, or at least one year past installation of the last practice. The contract will be carried out according to the conservation plan that you developed. All practices established with EQIP funding must be maintained for the life span of the practice.

What's new in EQIP?

- All livestock operators are eligible to receive cost-share payments for waste storage facilities regardless of the number of animal units.
- A comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP) will be required of all livestock producers who receive funding for animal waste storage systems.
- Participants can receive payments for installed practices as early as the first year of the contract.

Conservation Practices

- Access road
- Ag-fuel storage facility
- Animal trails & walkways
- Brush management
- Composting facility
- Comprehensive nutrient management planning
- Constructed wetland
- Contour farming
- Contour buffer strips
- Contour orchard and other fruit area
- Cover crop
- Critical area planting
- Deep tillage
- Dike
- Diversion
- Dry hydrant
- Early successional habitat
- Fence
- Field border
- Filter strip
- Firebreak
- Fish pond management
- Forage harvest management
- Forest stand improvement
- Forest site preparation
- Forest trails and landings
- Grade stabilization structure
- Grassed waterway
- Heavy use area protection
- Hedgerow planting
- Herbaceous wind barriers
- Invasive plant species control
- Irrigation regulating reservoir
- Irrigation storage reservoir
- Irrigation water conveyance (water quantity or quality)
- Irrigation water management
- Irrigation, microirrigation
- Land clearing
- Land smoothing
- Lined waterway or outlet
- Manure transfer
- Mulching (biodegradable)
- Nutrient management
- Obstruction removal
- Open channel
- Pasture and hay planting
- Pest management
- Pipeline (livestock watering)
- Pond (livestock watering)
- Pond sealing or lining
- Prescribed grazing
- Pumping plant
- Recreation trail and walkway
- Residue management (no-till or mulch-till)
- Restoration/management of rare & declining habitats
- Riparian forest buffer
- Riparian herbaceous buffer
- Riparian herbaceous cover
- Roof runoff structure
- Row arrangement
- Sediment basin (including as part of an animal waste system)
- Shallow water management for wildlife
- Shellfish aquaculture (pending approval of interim standard)
- Silage leachate collection and transfer
- Spring development
- Streambank and shoreline protection
- Stripcropping
- Structure for water control (cranberry)
- Subsurface drain
- Transition to organic production
- Tree/shrub pruning
- Underground outlet
- Waste facility cover
- Waste storage facility
- Waste utilization
- Waste water treatment strip
- Water & sediment control basin
- Watering facility
- Well
- Windbreak/shelterbelt

Offices to contact for help

Rhode Island NRCS Office

46 Quaker Lane, Suite 46

Warwick, RI 02886

Phone: 401.828.1300

Fax: 401.828.0433

Eastern Rhode Island Conservation District

2490 Main Road

Tiverton, RI 02878

Phone: 401.624.7490

Fax: 401.624.7491

Email: ericd@ri.nacdnet.org

Northern Rhode Island Conservation District

17 Smith Avenue

Greenville, RI 02828

Phone: 401.949.1480

Fax: 401.949.4436

Email: gina-demarco@ri.nacdnet.org

Southern Rhode Island Conservation District

60 Quaker Lane, Suite 46

Warwick, RI 02886

Phone: 401.822.8832

Fax: 401.828.0433

Email: alicia-lehrer@ri.nacdnet.org

For more information on the
Rhode Island EQIP program or to download
application visit:

www.ri.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip.html

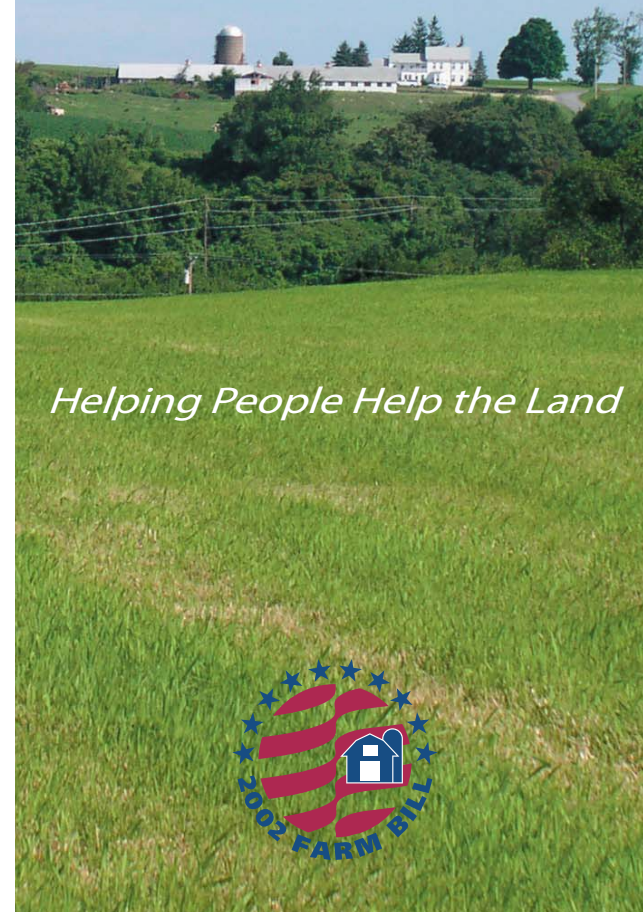
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United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

in Rhode Island



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